

# *The Omen*

forges on, bringing you yet another issue jam-packed with whatever anybody happened to e-mail to us since we finished the last issue early <sup>on</sup> ~~of a Sunday~~ Tuesday morning. Except the erotica, which <sup>oh</sup> god... will appear in the next issue of *The Omen*.

Though this issue of *The Omen* doesn't contain any erotic stories, it does contain the usual dose of sanctimony, exhortation, sarcasm, cynicism, high-minded criticisms of the administration, comics, sheep, starburst-enclosed page numbers, double-lined borders, Adobe Garamond, staff boxes, pull-quotes, and filler. If things have gone according to plan, it may contain a link to a podcast, or else a transcription of the would-be podcast, or else nothing at all, only an empty space where such things would have gone if they were truly meant to be.

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for the fourth issue in the 29th Volume of the Omen on October the twenty-sixth in 2007, the year of our Lord.

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### STAFF

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## TO SUBMIT:

Submissions are due on alternating Saturdays before 5 P.M. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, semaphore, or email. Get your submissions to Lindsay Barbieri, Merrill B103, Box 0542, lkb06@hampshire.edu

"Not all Fanfics are gay! What about Hermione/Hagrid?"  
- Marco on Fanfics

Front Cover:

Evan Silberman

Back Cover:

Andrew Flanagan



omen.hampshire.edu

Jacob Lefton

Editorial

## No Confidence in President Hexter: Not a Defender of Hampshire's Ideals

Having read President Hexter's Letter to the Editors in the Climax (October 16), I must admit I find his handling of Judicial Council misguided and irresponsible. His catty and defensive response is disrespectful to John Kennedy and to Community Council. His actions are more autocratic than democratic, and certainly counter to the values he expressed were important in his latest "Making of the College 2.1."

My focus in this argument is on students, because I am a student and a representative of students to the board of trustees. For the sake of simplicity, understand that in any case when I argue for rights, fair treatment of, or inclusion of students into decision making, I also mean, where applicable and reasonable, faculty and staff.

President Hexter refuses to work in an inclusive manner with students in setting up grievance procedures and a Judicial Council as called for in the college's constitution. His argument seems simple: Judicial

Council has not existed for almost ten years. As it, within Hampshire's governance structure, is comparable to the Supreme Court in the United States, we should approach it with no undue haste. In fact, because of the poor quality of the whole constitution, establishing a Judicial Council now would be pointless as the whole system is due for a re-write. In the meantime, he has decided that he and his designees will be the Judicial Council.

During his speech at Commencement in May 2007, he said:

"Our student trustee, Jacob Lefton, has written in the latest number of The Omen... 'We need Ralph to start protecting the ideas that brought us here.' This is a heavy burden, but one I am proud to be asked to shoulder even as I ask myself how I can best discharge my responsibility. Surely there is some variety in the ideas that brought each one of us here, even each student, and Jacob is referring to Hampshire students above all."

If I am handing out gears, I should be considered an

## POLICY

The Omen is Hampshire's longest-running bi-monthly publication, established by Stephanie Cole and Scott Tundermann in December of 1992. In the past, submissions have included students' perspectives on the campus, administration, news, movie reviews, commentary, short fiction, satire, first born, artwork, comics, and the occasional embarrassing self-promotion.

Everything the Omen receives, provided it is sent from a member of the Hampshire community, will be published unless it is deemed libelous or defamatory. Although we find such things amusing and entertaining for countless hours, it is just not an option in this forum. Libel will be considered clearly false or unsupportable writing that maliciously

damages a person's reputation.

The Omen will not edit anything you write (except spelling and grammar). You must sign your real name (no anonymous submissions) and understand that you are responsible for what you say. Nonetheless, views in the Omen do not necessarily represent the views of anyone, anywhere, living or dead.

There is no Omen staff, save those positions of editor-in-chief and layout editor. To qualify for community service you must be a consistent contributor and help regularly with layout. Layout times (and such) will be discussed at our meetings. Meetings are held every Tuesday after release of an issue in the Leadership Center at 6PM. Everyone, everywhere, living or dead, should come.

The Omen loves you.



THE OMEN CHAIR LIBEL:

Views in the Omen (5)

Do not necessarily (7)

Reflect the staff's views (5)



arbiter of them as well.

I hardly think the autocratic manner in which President Hexter is approaching the governance of this college is in any way 'protecting' ideas that drew and continue to draw students to Hampshire.

At the beginning of his letter, the president attempts to "set the record straight but assure all members of the community," about three points. The first is something that both he and I can agree on — the situation *is* anomalous and *does* need correction. We need a Judicial Council to have any hope of an effective system of checks and balances, but because of feints, dodges, and outright blocks by the administration, we do not know how to go about setting it up.

He goes on to say that with trustees he has been laying the groundwork for an appropriate solution. I hardly call a conversation during the Executive Session with the most disconnected members of the active Hampshire community 'groundwork' toward anything but a legal defense if the Sate comes around to make sure we are actually doing what we say we do. As he states in the letter, "the board is cognizant of increased public oversight of institutions and an increased concern... for practices that do not match written policies."

Finally, President Hexter attempts to absolve the administration from responsibility for any misinformation on this subject that has been presented to Council. What a bold statement! Considering that Council attempted to work through the last contact named in the non-confidential portion of the Judicial Council records, Aaron Berman—Dean of Faculty—I fail to see how the administration is *not responsible* for any and all information about the Judicial Council. Considering that more than two generations of students have come and gone from Hampshire since the last Judicial Council meeting, and that the Judicial Council records are sealed, students should not be held responsible for *any* misinformation. We have what we can get, which isn't much, and few are intent on helping us.

Clearly, as the constitution says, the president is responsible for Judicial Council, not students. Yet he shows no responsibility in the *handling* of the matter. When students turned to him and Dean

Berman with a request to patch the judicial hole in the college's governance a year ago, they were refused. Upon further mention of the issue in the form of Kennedy's "End the Apathy" article, they were scolded like children. He acts as if he holds in little regard the amount of work that did go into the proposal and that is currently going into finally voting on Community Council's bylaws.

Something else President Hexter may not know is that talk about reforming the constitution came up some number of years ago among student leaders. It was something they would have brought up more publicly, but clear disregard for students' opinions by the administration on almost every other matter, as well as trying to ratify their own bylaws kept them from making serious moves on that issue.

A stickler for details, said the president, would point out that Community Council's lack of bylaws means they should have no power anyway. What a low, shameful blow, aiming for students' weaknesses. I want to point out that a stickler for details would also point out that the administration has been doing nothing to help student governance get back on their feet. Furthermore, a stickler for details would point out that actively disregarding student opinion and student governance authority proves that to the administration, Community Council has no power, regardless of how in touch with their bylaws they are.

The administration's response to Community Council has been to consolidate power in the chief executive's office by making himself and his special advisor the sole arbiters of justice, for an unknown period of time. If Judicial Council is to be our Supreme Court, imagine for a moment, if you will, that President Bush appointed Karl Rove to decide cases that should be going to the Supreme Court. While I at times admire both President Hexter and Professor Dávila with the utmost respect, and neither are in the same league of evil as those men in our federal government, there are certainly some similar qualities of thought.

Furthermore, President Hexter points out that the constitution itself has led a shadowy existence from its ratification in February 1998, as it was supposed to be delivered to a legal counsel who was

to report inconsistencies back to the board before it went effect that July. That we know of, no report was filed. The president even says recent trustees and the college's current legal counsel were unaware of the constitution's existence—clearly a case of neglect on the college's part, but we can't dwell on the past.

If you follow his arguments, you run into the problem that the college is presently acting without a fully ratified constitution, and is also acting outside of it. The president's fix for this is approaching the board verbally and then appointing an administrator in attempt to sidestep any potential legal investigations into the college's foul play. There is apparently a plan in the works to fully remedy the situation, but he gives us no timeline. The college has existed in a half-alive stupor for years, and continued mediocrity on the highest level is being sanctioned by the college's leader.

It's both mediocrity and autocracy. President Hexter states, "I hope the Community will join me in this effort, for it must be a collaborative one, but it must be one that proceeds in an orderly fashion." Sadly, it is a collaborative effort in which the groundwork is not collaborative. This is not a strong foundation for what the students want. This is not a foundation defending what brought us here to Hampshire in the first place.

In "Making of the College 2.1," President Hexter says, "... responsibility... has never found its necessary place in the liberal arts." It is no small wonder that this is true if college presidents keep carrying on in the manner that he is. He is failing to model good behavior—unless his tactic is that of Papa Bear in the Bernstein Bears Bike Lesson, saying, "this is what you should not do." It should be clear at this point that President Hexter is not acting responsibly.

And in a childlike indignant manner, he tries to emphasize a 'reality.' "I am the one that brought the Constitution, dusty, neglected and ignored, to the attention of the Board, and 'twas I who made the case for serious attention to the area of governance."

Shame on you, President Hexter. How you could even begin to take credit for something on which countless students have worked for countless hours, days, weeks, months? As I said before, students have been on the ball long before administrators—we are

ahead of the administration with almost everything, ranging from academics to governance to campus life—because we *live* this experience. We pulled that dusty constitution off the shelf *years* ago. If the administration paid students any more mind than mere courtesy and tokenism, Hampshire as a whole would be actively grappling with these issues rather than blatantly ignoring students.

What the president has not done, and should do, is set up a provisional Judicial Council made of equal parts students, staff, and faculty, as the Constitution calls for. The purpose for this Provisional Council will be to work with the legal counsel and lay down a coherent foundation for grievances and justice that can move forward into future revisions of the Constitution. I call for it now with the authority that I have as a trustee of Hampshire College. President Hexter would do a disservice to the institution by resisting this effort.

The provisional council must be in place by February 1st, one week before the February 8th and 9th meeting of the board of trustees. This gives the President three months to simply *find* willing volunteers. If there is not a provisional council ready to function by February 1st, the issue I will bring before the board, with what I expect will be an overwhelming amount of student support. If provisions are in place, a review will happen on May 1st to assess how much progress has been made. The results will be presented to the board during the May 16th and 17th meeting.

I do not think this is an unreasonable timeline. It has been approximately a full calendar year since Community Council first asked Dean Berman to hold elections for Judicial Council. That twelve months have passed with no hint of what students asked for is an embarrassment.

Respectfully,  
Jacob Lefton  
Student Trustee

# An Eulogy for Hampshire College

as delivered by David Axel Kurtz, F06/DivI on 10/13/2007

We are gathered here today to mourn the passing of Hampshire College. Perhaps we had better say, the Hampshire tree, though its leaves are now falling, institution remains. The Hampshire tree, though its leaves are now falling, shall burgeon and bloom again when spring returns. Just as first years will continue to apply here whatever this institution offers, and professors will still fight to be the ones to teach them. The buildings themselves in their myriad ugliness have not these things do Hampshire that

The college is not what we is not, to put it College any or not the future great rebirth renaissance of dreams - as we College is dead.

was started the highest of Look at our library stares

a factory-second tissue box. Greenwich looks like nothing so much as the leftovers of God's first experiment with flipping pancakes. Catch it in the right light, and this is indeed an ugly college.

But it is precisely here that lay the spirit of Hampshire. It was Hampshire's goal to be more than just a jumble of halls all covered in gloss and money and ivy. Each one of our brutalist buildings and moldy mods was to be as a declaration to the world of the virtues of mind over matter.

"It does not matter what we look like," they said. "What matters is what goes on within us." The trappings of the physical world could be found a brief bus ride away at Amherst or MoHo or Smith. "Here," said our college, "we are content to abandon the material, the better to discover the wonders of the world of the mind."

We were once a part of a larger community, it is true, but we were not equal to those in our consortium. We did not wish to be. We were different. We cared nothing for gables and gambrels, Mansards and domes, observatories and arboretums and horse-paddocks the size of truck stops. We liked our

"It is not, to put it simply, Hampshire College any longer... Hampshire College is dead."

departed. Yet all not make up the once was. that we have now set out to have. It simply, Hampshire longer. Whether shall bring a to this place, a its ideals and speak, Hampshire

Hampshire to exemplify heuristic ideals. campus. Our down at us like

News, Commentary,  
Announcements,  
Propaganda,  
Editorials.

ivy-free buildings. We were proud of our football-stadium-less grounds. We didn't mind that we had more pumpkins than parking spaces and more apples than students. We had ourselves, and the freedom to seek out our educations in the ways that were best for us.

The pumpkins and FPH remain both, but now we do not have that freedom.

I think I am qualified to speak on this matter. I am a Hampshire student and a Div I to boot. I came here because I shared these ideals. I wanted my college to be a place of learning, of community, a place where I could live a life that I would love and would look forward to sustaining for the remainder of my days. I wanted a college that would make Socrates' garden look like an SAT prep course. I want that still.

This was once, I really think, such a place. Hampshire was an oasis of self-direction and self-

responsibility, those twin faces of the ying-yang that forms learning. We put ourselves out in the woods so we could focus our attentions solely and squarely upon our educations. We were here to self-actualize; indeed, we put ourselves in a

situation where we could do absolutely nothing else. Nobody was going to do it for us. But here, we could do it for ourselves, and for us, that was enough.

Now we can barely do that, and every year, every semester, it is getting harder.

I entered Hampshire with stars in my eyes concerning self-motivated research and independent studies. My first semester here, I was told point-blank by my advisor that he would not allow a tender first year to take any independent studies. I took four classes in different schools to fulfill my distribution requirements, none of which were classes that appealed to me, but I had to take them nonetheless. I could not take courses of a level that satisfied my educational needs, because only 100-level courses satisfied the mandates of the Div I program. I was not able to get into one class in creative writing, despite the fact that this is the area I particularly

wish to study. When I wanted to challenge myself, I did so by myself, alone, in my room, unassisted by the school and by the school unrewarded.

We don't talk about what we're studying. We talk about what classes we're taking. More importantly, we need to know how many we've taken. We ask each other, "How many credits do you have?"

My next semester was no different. I still had requirements to fulfill and could barely bring myself to fulfill them. I could not find a fourth class that both appealed to me and would allow a Div I entrance, and so I am as of this moment on academic probation at Hampshire. I don't do drugs, I don't raise my voice, and I spend more time in my room doing my own thing than Papillon. Yet my value as a student is being judged by my ability to please teachers in a classroom setting. I might as well be getting grades.

Right now I am taking two independent studies.

I spent more time last semester trying to get these studies than I did on my classes. I asked well over a dozen professors to meet with me to discuss a possible study. Most of them wouldn't even return my eMails. Most of those who I was able to track

down said they were too busy; there is no incentive for them to spend their free time on a humble Div I. I have no idea who I will have on my Div II committee, because the limits of being Div I have kept me from taking the classes taught by the professors with whom I would most wish to work.

It is a cycle that is more than just vicious. It is boring. It is inefficient. It is a waste of my time. It is a waste of my parent's money. It is not the college that I want for myself. It is not my Hampshire.

What we have now is - a college. I hope that thought scares you as much as it does me. We have a college just like any other. Where once we abjured, we now strive only to embrace. Hegel's wheel has turned, and ground us beneath it into the very Institution to which we once offered an alternative. The only difference is, we haven't raised enough money from our alumni, yet, to make our campus as pretty as all the others.

Continued on Page 9...

# A Dirge for Hampshire College

by the Mourners of the College

O I wish that I had been here back in nineteen seventy  
An experimental college for a new society  
But the revolution couldn't last and that's bad news for me  
BUT HAMPSHIRE MAY YET LIVE

Glory, Glory Hallelujah  
Glory, Glory Hallelujah  
Glory, Glory Hallelujah  
But Hampshire may yet live

It's us who need a vision like when Hampshire first was made  
Not some gilded ivory tower slowly teaching us a trade  
And we won't sit round and let that vision slip away betrayed  
FOR HAMPSHIRE MAY YET LIVE

O I wish at least that I'd been here in two thousand and three  
At least then old Hampshire students could have been some help to me  
Now they've all moved on and they have left naught but the Hampshire tree  
BUT HAMPSHIRE MAY YET LIVE

I made a choice not to apply to Harvard, Duke, or Yale  
I found them not too challenging, just boring, bland, and pale  
But then I came to Hampshire just to find it's just as stale  
BUT HAMPSHIRE MAY YET LIVE

I came here with independence and such stars in my eyes  
I was told that this experiment would beautifully surprise  
Now I find this 'alternative' is just marketing and lies  
BUT HAMPSHIRE MAY YET LIVE

I've got too much invested, too much time, tuition fees  
For this is my life and I intend to do just as I please  
But now I find that my college is just then next SATs  
O HAMPSHIRE WON'T YOU LIVE

For we see these injustices and they cannot be borne  
We can't just stand here getting high while getting more forlorn  
That is why we stand here singing – IT IS WORTH THE RISK TO MOURN  
FOR HAMPSHIRE MAY YET LIVE!



## Eulogy Cont.

But the simple fact is that there are too many people in this country who want to go to college for the market to need to compete for their enrollment. Even with this sacrificing of Hampshire's ideals we are still having no trouble filling every room, and every lounge, in every dorm and mod. There is no outside incentive to keep Hampshire true to her mission. Unless we provide that incentive ourselves, not out of a desire for tuition dollars or academic prestige but out of loyalty to a higher ideal for its own sake, Hampshire College is destined to become nothing less nor more than any of the other colleges in the consortium or in the country.

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust, Hampshire College is dead. One day, I hope that there is another brave institution which will do what we once did, a college which will stand as an alternative to that great system of which we are now a part. Until then, let us mourn her passing. She was a noble attempt, and its failure is as worthy of our tears as anything in this world. And for myself, I will just go back to doing what I did in high school – sleep through my classes, so that I will be well rested for getting back to my room and doing what needs to be done for my education.

## Another Eulogy for Hampshire

by Katheryn Solorzano Lowell

There is a reason we have decided to come together to mourn today. We have lost something that is very dear to us: institutional support for students that want to take initiative in their own formal education. It's hard to put a date on when we lost it. As hard as it was for my class entering in 03, one year after required student initiated Division I projects had been banned, it is bleaker still for the 2006-2007 students who are finding it difficult to get in to challenging 200 and 300 level courses even in their third semester. I can say that we feel this loss bitterly.

But I don't want to focus on the bitter. Support, real support, for student initiative is a beautiful thing. When I came here, students from the years before me talked about how academically challenging their first year was, and how their frustrations- and frustration is not necessarily a bad thing- arose from having to participate in and engage their education. It arose from

having to make their own decisions... from having to take responsibility for themselves. It was hard work, and it was a beautiful thing. I remember hearing about allot of different kinds of projects, but there was one thing that was consistent. Students would tell me, looking back at their Div I's "You know, I really learned allot". I just want to acknowledge the value in that before it is completely forgotten.

This College still had a certain buzz when I first came here. That buzz has gotten allot quieter. After 5 1/2 years of lying un-mourned and un-buried, after institutional abandonment, the desire for student initiated work and student driven inquiry- the spirit of Hampshire College- is weaker but it is still here. I can see this in the drive and dedication of so many entering students. We mourn our loss today in the hope that we can save that spirit.

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TO ATTEND IS NOT ENOUGH



# Food Fight: Sodexo and the Future

by Noah Kellerman

I'm writing this announcement as a heads up to an opportunity that we as a student body have to change the way that we are nourished here at Hampshire. But first, a little background:

Saga is run by Sodhexo, which is a multinational foodservice corporation based in France. It is one of the largest companies of its kind, serving many colleges, universities, corporations, public schools, US military mess halls and even prisons.

Its role in schools and prisons has raised controversy, most notable in the film *Supersize Me*. There have been numerous student boycotts against Sodhexo in reaction to Sodhexo's far from stellar record on worker's rights, its relationship with the military and its role in the private prison system.

Due in part to the mammoth size of the parent corporation, Most of the food that comes to Saga is highly processed and distributed from large, centralized plants, using food that is grown far away. Getting our food from industrial farms far away means that it is less fresh, and therefore less nutritious and flavorful than its local counterparts. It also puts our food supply at risk to contamination (remember the spinach last year?). This system makes it difficult to use more local sources, because most local agriculture is on too small of a scale to fit into this industrial model. Just think of the tired, mushy apples from far away in Saga, when it's the height of apple season here.

Saga has in recent years made an effort to use more local products, such as purchasing 20 shares

in the Hampshire CSA and sourcing from some local farmers. We appreciate these changes, but we think that it could be much better.

Hampshire's contract with Sodhexo is up for reevaluation this year. The Local Foods Coalition is working on this issue. We would like to examine

"We would like to examine replacing Sodexo with a more ecologically and socially sustainable foodservice"

replacing Sodhexo with a more ecologically and socially sustainable foodservice company that would make a greater effort to use local foods whenever possible.

One of the biggest concerns with a change of company is the job security of the current staff. We must make sure that if a change takes place, all of the current Sodhexo employees have the option to stay on with the new company without a reduction in pay or benefits. Again, it's the large corporation we are trying to rid ourselves of, not our friends at Saga.

We have a chance to change Saga this year for a greener, more nutritious, and most of all more delicious future. We hope that you

will be aware of, and support us on this issue in the coming semesters.

The Local Foods Initiative meets at Thorpe House (Farm Center) on Tuesday nights at 6:30 for business and 7:00 dinner and announcements. Feel free to join us and if you have any questions or wish to join our mailing list email Tobin Porter-Brown at [tp05@hampshire.edu](mailto:tp05@hampshire.edu).



# Yoga as Political Praxis

by K. Olive McKeon

This text serves as an introduction to anti-fascist yoga – a form of yoga for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, first-world practitioner and all social change- and body-enthusiasts.

## Observation

Yoga is the observation of bodily changes created by asana/pranayama practice. By this definition, advancement in yoga pertains to the acuteness of observation of changes in the body in distinction to the idea that advanced yogis are identified by the difficulty and depth of their postures.

## Specificity

I cultivate a non-competitive approach to yoga. Each yogi comes to the practice with a corporeal and historical specificity ensuring a specific set of challenges and limitations. One's practice will reflect the distinctiveness of one's body. Thus, the act of competing or comparing one's practice with that of another falls back into the traps of normalization and hierarchy. There is no standard or norm by which to judge one's practice. Yoga is a non-competitive and kinetically diverse space.

## Modification

Every body can participate in yoga. The notion of the full or correct pose is misleading. Every pose can be further complicated with binding, twisting, balancing, and inverting. Each pose is an endless process that has no full or complete expression. Rather than thinking of postures as being either full or modified, I prefer to think of asanas as necessarily modified to the specific desires of each practitioner. This opens yoga to practitioners of all body types and abilities.

## The Benefits of Yoga\*

Yoga improves fitness, lowers blood pressure, promotes relaxation and self-confidence, and reduces stress and anxiety. People who practice yoga tend to have good coordination, posture, flexibility, range of motion, concentration, sleep habits, and digestion. Yoga is a complementary therapy that has been used with conventional therapies to help treat a wide range of health problems, but it is not a cure for any

particular disease. Studies show that yoga may help the following conditions:

- Anxiety and stress
- Arthritis (osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis)
- Asthma
- Cancer (as an adjunct therapy to reduce stress and strengthen the immune system)
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- Chronic back pain
- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Hormonal imbalances
- Irritable bowel syndrome
- Pregnancy

\**(Yoga: What is yoga good for? Univ. of Maryland Medical website. December 2002.)*

## Colonization and Cultural Appropriation

I aim to maintain an open and ongoing discussion of power and appropriation regarding the practice of yoga in the United States. I intend to challenge, play with, and add more thorns to these issues instead of objecting/affirming yogic practices in non-South East Asian countries.

Cultural Appropriation: a more powerful culture raids a less powerful culture appropriating practices and ideas without acknowledgment or understanding the context from which these practices arise.

– The arrogance of a European-descendent lifting ancient Indian traditions, claiming the authority to teach them, and earning money off of the practices of less powerful culture

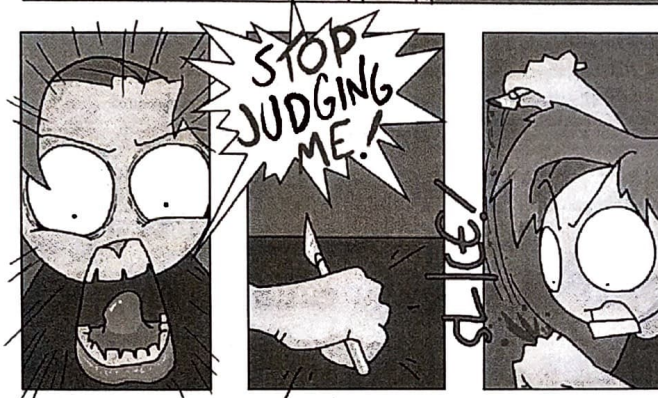
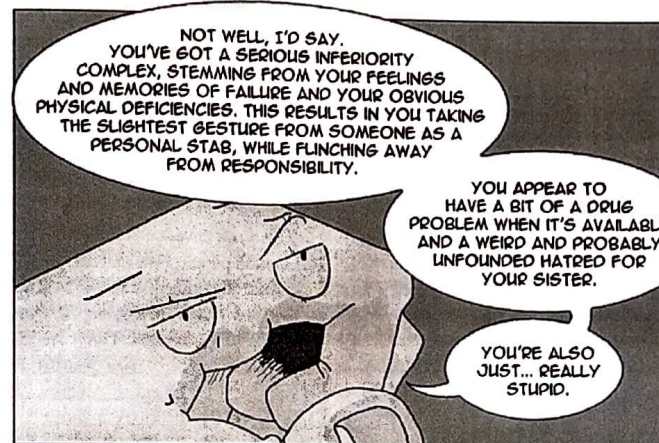
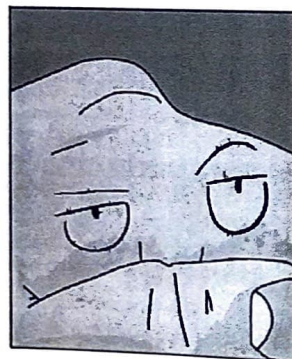
## Diffusion

A number of Indian yoga teachers want to spread yoga to countries further west and set up centers in the United States to disseminate their teachings. Dating back to the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago when Swami Vivekananda introduced yoga at the World's Parliament of Religions, there has been an over 100 year old tradition of Indian yogis teaching in western countries.

*Continued on Page 14...*

## Nate Vs. Sqnty

(WITH APOLOGIES TO THE FEW WHO'VE ALREADY SEEN THIS, BUT IT'S NEW TO THE OMEN, AND THE NEW ONE I MADE REALLY SUCKED. TRUST ME.)



Yoga in non-Indian countries reflects processes of cultural diffusion. Cultures necessarily borrow and reframe each other's practices. Yoga is not an immutable tradition. It has undergone innumerable changes and variations as different teachers and eras have shifted and changed its character.

### Diffusion and Appropriation

Appropriation is distinct from diffusion in the sense that one party has far more resources at its disposal. The movement of yoga through the US falls under the American legacy of colonizing, stealing, co-opting, and capitalizing off of other traditions and peoples.

### The Purist's Position

In the US, yoga has come to signify asana practice, merely one aspect of the ancient Indian spiritual tradition. Western yoga is marked by a superficiality and one-dimensional approach that commonly understands yoga to be a few poses before a workout at the gym.

### The Trap of Identity Politics

Questions of who can/should practice fall into the snarls of identity politics whose primary function is to distract public discourse from changing current social and political structures. Identity politics assumes the present state of society asking questions not of how to change social structures but rather of how to rearrange who plays the already established roles. Why bother oneself with the identity of who practices yoga and who does not when systemic violence permeates the globe?

### Shifting Signifiers/ Difference\*

Origins are inventions. There never has been or will be a pure yoga. Rather yoga as a signifier shifts recklessly over an endless variety of signifieds.

I utilize asana and pranyama practice and avoid all other aspects of yoga to an explicitly secular and political end. Does this constitute appropriation?

"We are obsessed with the body... mirrors, gyms, personal trainers, plastic surgery, the beauty industry, eating disorders, beauty pageants..."

Pillaging? Colonization? Diffusion? Dialogue? Change? Increased alternatives?

\*(Derrida, Jacques. "Difference," Margins of Philosophy, Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1982.)

### Social and Economic Positioning\*

Americans spend \$2.95 billion a year on yoga classes and products, including equipment, clothing, vacations and media (DVDs, videos, books and magazines).

The study revealed that 7.5% of U.S. adults, or 16.5 million people, now practice yoga, an increase of 5.6% from the prior year and 43% from 2002.

Gender: 77.1% are women, 22.9% are men.

Age: 29.1% are 18-34, 41.6% are 35-54.

\*Yoga Journal Press Release.  
"Yoga in America Market Study,"  
February 7, 2005.

### The Politics of the Body

The social role and function of the body in contemporary society has contradictory characterizations and countless angles -- denigration, obsession, and innumerable others.

"We avoid and denigrate the body... Cartesian dualism... body as feminine and privative... body as unholy, profane, shameful, lowly... shame about sex... nudity taboo... lack of physical touch... more likely to speak to someone than touch them... physical education as less important and worthy than academic subjects... bodily concerns (e.g. menstruation) as an interruption of one's life...

forgetting and neglecting the body... obesity, lifestyle disease..."

or

"We are obsessed with the body... mirrors, gyms, personal trainers, plastic surgery, the beauty industry, eating disorders, beauty pageants... identity as a bodily performance... cultural studies... postmodernism and the surface... judging covers rather than books... Kennedy beat Nixon because he wore make-up and

did not look sweaty in the first televised presidential debate..."

### Plasticity of the Body

Yoga teaches that the body does not have an identity or set of characteristics but rather a functionality. Yoga addresses what the body can do not rather than what it is. It unveils the plasticity of the body and the connection between materiality and praxis. Bodies and subjects form their contours through practice. Yoga can be a tool to (re)create the body.

### Embodied Political Praxis

Yoga is a tool that can open, heal, and change the body. It grounds practitioners in a careful observation of kinetic sensation providing its students with bodily awareness and engagement that can run numb in a economic system relentlessly selling us commodities to distract from the body. It is a means to enjoy the body, to relish in its sensations, to appreciate its mechanisms, to observe its patterns and possibilities. Yoga can calm anxiety, stress, worry, and anger with only healthful side effects.

### Resistance

I view yoga as an act of resistance. The current social system designs jobs, cities, and lifestyles to be stressful, unhealthy, and melancholy. The same system then sells countless commodities to numb or tranquilize widespread anxiety, health problems, and depression. Consider the amount of consumption in first world countries that is tied to stress, illness, and sadness. Once someone studies yoga, s/he can practice anywhere without permission or fee. It is a free tool that can be used to calm and renew the body without any recourse to exploitation and profit.

### Exteriority and the social world

My approach to yoga is social rather than personal or spiritual. Yoga teachers will frequently use the language of turning inward and bringing one's attention to the depths of oneself. I view the body and the self as social products. Ecological and social systems form and create the body as well as mold the most intimate sense of self. Identity is relational created between and because of others. Bodily practices such as yoga turn not inwards but

outwards; the body pours out of itself.

### Secularity & Agnosticism

Yogis frequently teach asana and pranyama as part of a spiritual practice. I differ drastically in my explicitly secular, agonistic, and anti-fascist approach. The task of the citizen and the intellectual is not to find a set of ideas to believe in and hence cease questioning and investigating them. Rather the aim is to consider a range of ideas and maintain an open and ongoing dialogue between different points of view. In my desire to think as an investigator rather than a believer, I ask critical questions about the philosophical and ethical commitments of spirituality, the social function of the divine, and the consequences of speaking as if god is an unchallengeable power.

### Anti-fascism

I advocate for a thoughtful and intellectually engaged yoga practice. I identify a seeping fascism in the instance of a teacher telling students exactly what to do and commanding them to quiet their minds and not think. I teach pro-thinking yoga.

K. Olive McKeon is a certified ashtanga teacher, language-enthusiast, and radical. She teaches classes at Amherst Yoga Center. Direct correspondence, affection, and disagreement to [kom04@hampshire.edu](mailto:kom04@hampshire.edu). For further information (not communication), visit: <http://stout.hampshire.edu/~kom04>



Flower.



Kitty.

Arrrticle  
goblins



# Historic Tales: The Vanity of Gelimer

by Ian Schwartz

...in those days the city was the city. Justinian was one of those many men in history who live solely to preserve their names in stone, and rather than scatter his vast kingdom with carved cairns like Ozymandias or Ashoka, that Emperor, the Emperor Justinian, focused his energies on the city of Constantinople. An earthquake had recently knocked everyone in the city to their feet, cracking the dome of the church of Holy Wisdom, Hagia Sophia, toppling its arches of bricks and smashing its pillars of marble. This site, at the center of the city, was no doubt destroyed by the grumbling stomach of Poseidon, whose mastodon girth was withering as fewer and fewer people spoke his name, as fewer and fewer people slashed the broad necks of bulls in his honor. And so Justinian decided to hammer yet another nail to the coffin of Pagan Poseidonism; he decided to preserve his name for all time; he decided to construct a far vaster and far grander church than anyone had ever seen before. He said he did this in the name of the Holy Wisdom of God; in reality, this colossus was built to flatter his own vanity, and to preserve his name for eternity.

A man named Herostratus once burned down a beautiful temple for the sole purpose of locking his name in history. He let himself be caught, he screamed his guilt at the top of his lungs as they hauled him off to the flames of his funeral pyre, so that he would be remembered, and because of this act of arson the name Herostratus still lives twenty-three hundred years after his bones turned to ash. He was yet another disenchanted youth with nothing to lose, a kind of historic spark akin to Gavrilo Princip. This form of vanity is not always in vain.

Most people who like trivia know that the word vandalism comes from a tribe of barbarians called the Vandals. What they don't know is that this huge horde of people—an entire people, an entire culture, an entire ethnicity, stretching from horizon to horizon—had been violently wandering Asia and Europe for centuries in search of a homeland. The

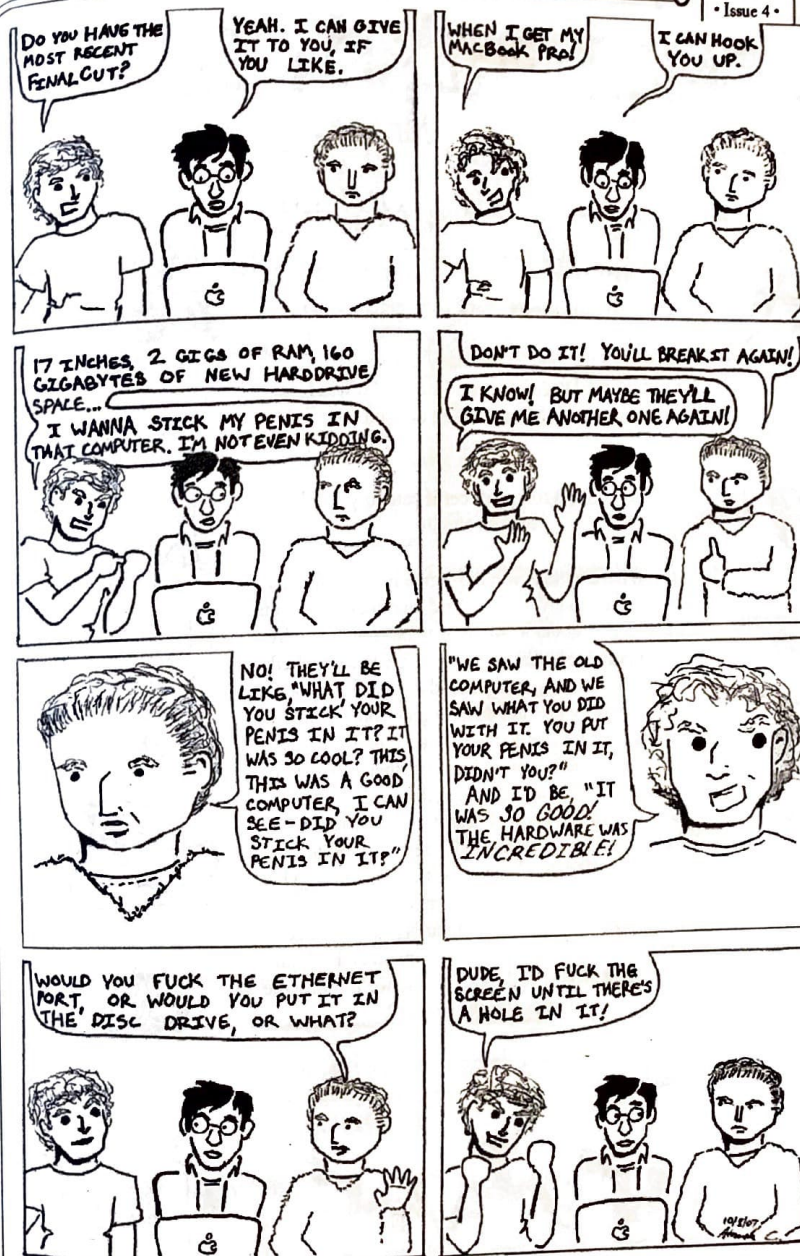
delicate opulence of the Mediterranean drew them to the blazing orchards and farmlands of the Roman Empire, to Spain, and then North Africa, which was then a far richer land of milk and honey than it is today. The Vandals pushed out the dithering Roman governors and set up their own kingdom, living in relative peace, fattening themselves off the peasants and the land, until one day a man named Justinian decided that he wanted to reclaim the ancient glory of Rome, and take back the territories lost to the barbarian invasions.

And so as the domes and pillars of the new Hagia Sophia raised themselves up above the skies of metropolitan Constantinople, the legendary general Belisarius was dispatched with an army of epics to retake the lands of North Africa. The army landed, the columns duked it out with the barbarians, the cavalry wheeled and flanked like flocks of birds; and Gelimer, the last king of the Vandals, was captured after his brother was slain in the last battle, after he lost heart. Such was the vehemence of this conflict, this victory, that North Africa was deserted and devastated for centuries, a land that echoed with the words of Tacitus—"They make a desert and they call it peace."

Belisarius brought Gelimer back to Constantinople and paraded him in the streets: the city-people screamed at the captured Vandals, and screamed for the triumphant Romans, spitting on the Vandals and kissing the Romans, crowding all the way to the Hippodrome: a great oval arena where thundering chariots raced and roared in the name of ancient mobs and mafias. Today was a special day, and in the shadow of the rising Church of Hagia Sophia the Vandal King Gelimer was brought before the Roman Emperor Justinian himself, clad in jeweled robes, and the shrieking crowds of thousands were silenced.

Gelimer's purple robes were stripped off, he was forced to his knees before the proudly grinning man on the throne, and compelled to say something. Thousands of people listened in still silence, in the silence of anxious

Continued on Page 31...



Athena Currier

MacBook Pro

# THE OMEN PRESENTS...

## THE "IT WAS A DARK AND SEXY NIGHT" CONTEST.

Cum On and Submit!

Crimson satin sheets, black lace lingerie, candles, wine, whips, a little silk scarf bondage...all this and more can be yours at the many dexterous, nubile hands of the Omen editors and staff, who will bring you an endless cliché of pleasure beyond your wildest dreams...

In the form of a \$20.00 gift certificate to your choice of porn shop!

All you have to do is win the Omen Erotica Contest! We want you to give it to us hard, and make us laugh while you're doing it. We want to be so inspired by your masterpiece that we find ourselves compelled to tell all our many, many friends to leave the room immediately, or else tell them to grab some glow-in-the-dark condoms and stay the night (depending on how hot your friends are). Seeing as there are masses of heaving, throbbing, gasping talent abound on this campus (I should know: I hear it echo down the hall every afternoon, evening, and 3 am), it shouldn't be too far from possible. No less possible than being hit by a bus full of Swedish super models on a tour of the America Northeast with their Nymphomaniacs Anonymous group, anyway. So cum on and submit your biggest an best to the Omen, and we'll return the favor, no strings attached.

Note: extra credit will be given for the inclusion of gratuitous illustrations and/or informative diagrams.



I'm uncomfortable!



I need an adult!

# Rubric for Assessment of Erotic Stories

A Note from the Judges

DEADLINE EXTENDED!

All Submissions Due Friday, November 2nd 2007

In order to fairly judge how good each submission to the erotic story contest is, we've had to come up with a rubric for dynamic assessment. We had to figure out how to properly account for the wildly different themes and emotions each story would encompass. How could we judge the depth of character? Variety of language? How could we equally rate the diverse voices of our many different, distinguished authors?

Our 'Rubric Committee' came up with two categories and three sub-categories:

**Wetness** is how wet we get, from our fluids or someone else's. You can think of this as the modern equivalent of the humors. The subcategories are:

**Tears** — Is wet stuff coming out of our eyes? Are we crying because it's bad? Hilarious? Because we got off? I had a girlfriend who cried after orgasm, so it's not unheard of.

**Lube** — Did this inspire us to grab a condom and fuck the next person we saw? Are we alone in our room with the kleenex and petroleum jelly and vibrator? Either way, are things getting hot and wet here?

**Cum** — How much of the text of this story is covered by our ejaculate? How much of our partner is? How many times did we get off?

**Emotion** can be considered the erotic version of the Ancient Greek's comedy and tragedy. What do we feel during the story?

**Pleasure** — Do these pages make us shiver with delight? Are we going to have to put on new panties before we go out? Did a particular passage or description cause a moan to escape our lips?

**Pain** — Is this story just a thesaurus for 'penis'? Is there a particularly awful turn of phrase that just makes us wince? Or maybe it inspired us to find that dom so we could finally get around to using those handcuffs that sis got us for Christmas.

**Laughter** — Either this story is so bad or incredibly witty, but either way, we're rolling so hard we can't read straight.

## It was a Dark and Sexy Night... Erotica Reading Party!

7:30pm on November 2nd in the KIVA. Come read your own erotic selections, short stories, poems or lyrics and maybe gain some performance points for our Contest! Or bring your favorite (or most amusing) published works along instead!

*Wear your corsets, top hats, black ties or whatever makes you feel sexy.*

Jericha Semyak's

# Dear Hampshire, Could We Have Better Sex Please?

Volume 3: Written February 11th, 2007

Having just shot my first full-on sex scene (which, for the record, was performed without the use of tasteful flesh-colored underwear), a rip-off of the slavegirl/Brad Pitt scene in *Troy*, I would say I'm in a pretty good mood this morning. I don't really know how it is I manage to get these very good-looking people to rip each other's clothes off on camera for me, but it went down with a minimum of awkwardness. Of course, they did have to deal with me berating them mid-fuck for being too nicey-nice (I don't know about you, but when the action starts with a knife to the throat, I don't want to see happy little cuddles, I want to see some dirty hot sex), but they were very gracious about it all.

Of course, now I have to say "if only real sex was like that!" Not just in the sense that I personally wouldn't mind having my clothes literally torn open (as long as I was wearing a dirty slavegirl-type shift and not some nice dress, obviously) but rather in the sense that it's extremely nice and extremely rare to go from being naked and vicious with someone for the first time to being calm, relaxed, friendly and ready to do it all over again the moment it's over. an, movie sex is

gauzy rolling-around-on-the-bed-mostly-naked shots to the next day, or at the very least to the couple curled up under the sheets. One day, when I'm not making a hokey movie about magicians in the woods on a nonexistent budget, I'm going to make a movie about normal people having normal sexual relationships that are both hot as hell and confusing as shit to all involved.

And where better to get material than my own life? I had actually intended this week's column to be about what I've learned over the years from my various ex-lovers. This is probably not the wisest idea ever, seeing as there are plenty of people out there who will know exactly who I'm talking about, but I figure that the guessing games (if there are any - I realize that most of the world has better things to puzzle over than which of my recent partners started barking like a dog in an intimate moment) will just add a little extra spice. I would not, of course, do anything nearly so tasteless

as name names; if you guess correctly, I don't want to hear about it.

So. They're listed chronologically, since the order did have an effect on the experience, and for the record I am only counting those I actually had sex with. Anything other than penetration ain't sex in my mind, no matter how intimate going down on someone may be.

#1. I was 14 and in love. He was 14 and not. I also lived on the other side of the world from him 90% of the year. I offered him my virginity because I was obsessed and also because I had the sneaky thought that if I was the first (he was, against all odds, also a virgin) he would remember me forever. The sex was entirely forgettable; the only thing I recall is that we both kept our glasses on. I went back to California and suffered vicious delusional heartbreak for eight months; however, because I had chosen to do it (it was, in fact, the one and only successful bootycall I've ever made - though granted, I've only ever made three) I still felt powerful. He was a douchebag, but I still called the shots. As it happens, he came crawling back a year later, by which time I had realized that he was a creep. I still feel slightly embarrassingly triumphant about this.

Lesson learned: Making calculated decisions about sex works out better than just giving in in a weak moment. The more calculated the better. Also, sex is much more powerful an emotional tool than anyone really wants to admit.

#2. Story is boring. He lived about an hour away from me. We went out for a few months and didn't do it. I called him up that fall to be my date to a dance (see? calculated decisionmaking!) and it set a precedent wherein he would come see me every few weeks, we'd rent a hotel room, have wild sex and then argue about politics on the phone in between trysts. At a certain point we got bored and simply stopped calling each other, in the most purely mutual ending I've ever had to a sexual anything.

Lesson learned: Casual sex is an entirely workable proposition as long as the two of you understand each other perfectly and are frank about the whole thing.

(Me: "Hey, how would you feel about being my date for this dance?" Him: "Yeah, sure, not like I have anything better to do." Me: "Bring condoms." Him: "Really? Cool." Afterwards: "That was fun. Let's do it again sometime.")

#3. I fell in love. Have not actually managed to fall out yet.

Lesson learned: First of all, all that bullshit about sex being so much better when you really love someone? Entirely, deeply, painfully true. It's scary as shit to be that close to someone but worth every second of it. Second, mutual orgasms are fuckign mindblowing.

Okay. There was more to it than that. I learned, for example, that it is shockingly easy to have sex on a plane. Basically, nobody is paying attention to you; you are not in fact broadcasting to the entire passenger load the fact that you're sneaking off to go fuck in the loos just because you're giggling down the aisle. And phone sex is much easier and probably a lot hotter if you know someone so well that you can visualize exactly how they look and sound; that way, you can avoid terrible tacky lines like "My name is Lacey, I have red hair and green eyes, big breasts, and I'm all wet and ready to fuck!" And furthermore, while cuddling with someone you barely know can be awkward and uncomfortable, cuddling with someone who knows every contour of your body like the back of their hand is awesome.

#4. This is where I got to college.

Lesson learned: lay out exactly what you're looking for (i.e. "I just got out of a really intense relationship and basically I need to sleep with someone else to get them out of my head") and nobody gets hurt.

#5. Lesson learned: Steady casual sex is possible as long as you don't seek each other out too often and never, ever actigny.

#6. Lesson learned: if you tell someone after you've had sex with them that you're looking for different things but you think they're an awesome person, fabulous and often hilarious friendships can result, especially if you're both comfortable enough to make jokes about the time you hooked up. Humor goes a long fucking way to making things unawkward.

#7. Lesson learned: Sometimes sex really fucks things up, especially if it involves two people who are both extremely emotionally vulnerable. It can just leave you feeling too naked and vulnerable and scared, and

you don't realize until it's too late that you need to slam shut all your doors, and then someone gets hurt. Ergo, if you feel like you're dealing with someone for whom sex is a big deal, or if you in fact feel that way yourself, make sure you've made your feelings about what happens AFTER the sex completely crystal clear or risk really fucking things up.

#8. Lesson learned: Some people, no matter how straightforward you are with them, just don't get it. You can tell them you want something casual till the cows come home, and they'll remain convinced that you're a) lying, b) deluding yourself or c) going to decide you want something more just when the sex is getting good. This may be because they're too narcissistic to accept that anyone could possibly have sex with them without, you know, falling madly in love, or it may be that they're just clueless and don't understand simple explanations. Either way, these people are often the people you would most like to be having sex with, but they generally freak out about you getting too attached (despite the fact that you had exactly zero desire to do anything but bang them) long before you've had a chance to fully enjoy them. The only thing to do about these people is give up on fucking them before they drive you permanently up the tree with their stubborn refusal to let things be nice and simple.

#9. Lesson learned: There are times when you can have perfectly good sex with someone whose company you enjoy, whom you're attracted to, who seems smart and cool and interesting, and yet for whatever reason it's just never going to happen again. This usually becomes clear by the time one of you leaves. If it seems like the other person does not, in fact, agree with you, avoiding them is a stupid way to get around any possible awkward situation wherein they want to hook up again and you don't. It's not that hard to be friendly and still remain clear on the fact that you're not going home with them.

What's really difficult is when you've hooked up with someone and you would like to hook up again, but you don't know if they do. This seems to be a rather common problem on campus; in fact, it happens pretty much every time two people who've been flirting for a while hook up for the first or second time. And it's really not an easy thing to just come out and ask "So hey, are we gonna do this again?" Though a simple way to discover the answer, booty calls are a little tasteless; instead, I suggest a two-part solution to this problem. Part 1. If you've hooked up

with someone and don't want to do it again, stop treating them like someone you want to hook up with (i.e. flirting madly with them) and start treating them like a friend. There is a palpable difference. Part 2. If you've hooked up with someone and do want to do it again, either suggest it to them (which, granted, does take some balls as there is always the possibility they'll turn down said suggestion or make it otherwise clear that it's not going to happen) or invite them to hang out in a situation where it will become clear how they feel. Watching a movie has always been my litmus test - it becomes obvious fairly quickly whether you're watching it as friends or as lovers, and you can act accordingly.

So. Just to recap, the message, as usual, is this: talk a lot and be nice to each other. Is that so fucking difficult?

And as for the sex scene...the premiere will be sometime in May if I don't die of overwork or inadvertently wipe my hard drive or have to murder one of my cast for being two hours late on set. You're all invited.

You can reach Jericha with questions, comments, or concerns  
at [jcs06@hampshire.edu](mailto:jcs06@hampshire.edu)



by Jesse Danner

*This comic did not appear in the last issue of the Omen due to a mistake on our part. The Omen would like to apologize most sincerely and we hope that you enjoy it in this issue.*

# The Omen Needs Hate

by Evan Silberman

The Omen has been short on hate lately. As such, I'm here to give you kids someone to hate on.

I will never feel guilty about eating meat. It's tasty, and as long as I don't have to watch animals die, I'll keep eating it. I'll buy humanely raised meat when I get to make those purchasing decisions, but seriously, we *created* cows. They would be killed by pumas if we freed them all tomorrow.

You don't have free will. It's a convincing illusion, and one you should take advantage of, but it's a deterministic universe, and your brain's chemical processes determine everything about you. You don't have a soul either.

Alternative medicine is bullshit. Anecdotal evidence is great and all, but I don't want to hear about your energy healing until you can show me a double-blind peer reviewed study in a medical journal showing me that it's more worthwhile than taking sugar pills.

I'm tired of hearing about global warming. It's obvious we're all doomed at this point, as only massive changes on a societal level will stave off the apocalypse. So either work to ban automobiles, or just shut up. We've got a few decades left in the first world as we know it, and I want to buy shit without you complaining.

If you don't understand science, you should shut up. If your mind isn't set up to truly appreciate science, then fine, but you should at least know some goddamn biology, chemistry, and physics. Not to mention calculus.

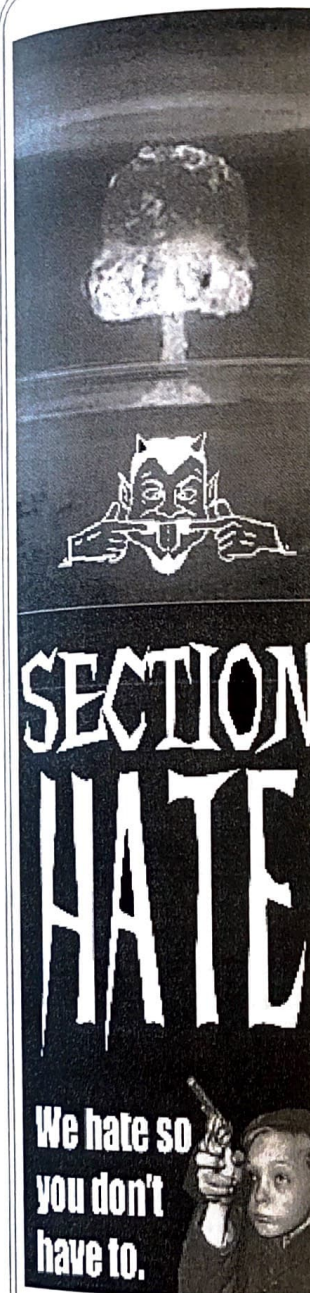
Smoking cigarettes is fucking dumb.

Trumpeting the achievements of the first woman/queer/black/Hispanic to do whatever is counterproductive and stupid. I'm happy for Ralph and Manfred, but it's not until the marriage of a gay college president attracts *no* attention that we're getting anywhere.

I am a bacon cheeseburger-eating atheist Jew. I don't see any contradictions there.

You are probably not particularly special. In all likelihood, several hundred people have interests, talents, dorm room posters, and personality quirks similar to yours. I bet I could kill you and replace you with someone like you, but better. Your friends would thank me.

Got a problem with that? **SUBMIT YOUR HATE TO THE OMEN.** Motherfuckers.



Omen  
Sheep  
wants  
you  
to get  
pissed.

# TRIP OR TREAT!

## Tips for a Successful Night

1. If someone gives you candy, eat it. No matter how sketchy the person was or how weird the candy looks.

2. Don't lock your dorm room/mod. In fact, you should leave the doors wide open. It would be a damn shame if those tricker-treaters couldn't come into your home and get candy, or all of your CDs just because you weren't there.

3. It might be chilly. You should bring lighter fluid and matches/a lighter with you at all times. You should start fires whenever you get cold. How else are you supposed to where that slutty washcloth-turned-skirt?

4. Make sure to be carrying enough alcohol on your person to get a small country drunk for a week. There will be a lot of people on campus and you want to make friends with all of them by getting them drunk.

5. It is OK to physically harm anyone whose costume offends you. Those blonde hair blue eyed white people... oh yeah, they're going down.

6. Carrying lots of weapons. Guns, swords, knives, lawnmowers, pepper spray (but really it's death acid), pitchforks, harpoons... you want to make sure people take you seriously and carrying weapons is the only way to do it.

7. If you can't think of a costume, just go naked. That way you won't run into that troubling social faux faux of bumping into someone who's wearing the same costume as you.

8. If Public Safety, the Police, or anyone with any authority attempts to tell you to do something that you don't feel like doing, just scream, "YOU'RE NOT THE BOSS OF ME!" and stomp your feet.

9. If you see someone passed out/bleeding or other-

wise in trouble, under no circumstances should you ever tell anyone. This is not a reasonable thing to bother the event staff for - they're trying to enjoy the night too. Just keep it to yourself and go somewhere else.

10. DO NOT drink water, eat food, or otherwise stay hydrated during the event. Just because some concerned citizens are giving out free water and oranges in FPH doesn't mean you have to put up with that crap. Just drink a lot of alcohol on an empty un-hydrate stomach. It's better that way.

11. Know your limits and then push them. No line should be left uncrossed. Make a list before the event of things you are not comfortable doing, and then see how many you can do in one night. It's the only way to have insure you have the best time possible.

12. Have unprotected sex with someone you've never seen before. Better yet, don't even exchange names or STD information. Just sex. It's more exciting.

### What You SHOULD'N'T Be for Halloween:

- A Can of Pabts Beer (you might get drunk)
- A Bong (you might get confiscated)
- A Joint (you might get smoked)
- A Brownie (you might get eaten)
- A Velociraptor (you might get put in a zoo)
- A Condom (you might get used)
- A "Ghost" (you're not fooling anybody Mr. Karl Kleinsberg Krishna)
- An Incorrectly Parked Car (you might get booted)
- A Republican (Bush is still president, do you want to get lynched?)
- An Omen Editor (Have you spent entire weekends (including Monday nights) in the Omen Office, staring at a crappy computer monitor until the sun is rising and you have class in 3 and a half hours? No? THEN YOU HAVEN'T EARNED THE RIGHT, BIATCH!)

# Course Catalog Supplement

## School of Natural Science

NS 102 Substances and You

Due to the overbearing legal constraints of our country, examining the influence of various drugs upon the human body is very difficult in the collegiate setting. With regards to this fact, we will begin to explore the concept of the experimenter again. We will attempt to debunk the myths about the combination of pot and beer, and explore the raw volumes possible for human consumption. Students will be expected to design their own experiments and extensive outside work is expected. Students are encouraged to work in groups, possibly with additional experimental factors such as music and nudity.

NS 277 Explosions and SEX

This course will serve as preparation for the Fall 2008 trip to ACTIVE VOLCANIC SITES with hot and sexy tour guides. That's all you need to know.

## School of Social Science

SS 101 Achtung!

Es gibt einen NAZI Witz irgendwo hier.

SS 152 genDER

Exploring the common misconceptions about gender that you probably have. Like that it exists.

SS 215 Science Experiments for Social Change

We're going to experiment with artificial tofu (so we don't hurt the beans), making toilet paper out of limestone (so we don't hurt the trees), and how to turn the sun off (so we can finally stop wasting unsustainable energy)

SS 314 gENDER

Let's end gender once and for all.

Prerequisite: genDER

## School of Cognitive Science

CS 246 Intimate Language Acquisition

We will learn how words are formed by exploring other people's mouths with our mouths while they speak. Must be tested for STDs prior to registering for this course.

CS 278 Robotic Philosophy

What does Confucius and a Robot have in common? Which came first, robots or God? Prove the existence of something and then animate it robotically.

## School of Humanities and Arts

HACU you've probably never heard of the number any-way B Sides and Side Projects

This course will explore and expand on valuable skills such as pretentiousness, obscurity and mandolin technique. Learn how to out-indie even the most intimidating of hipster, explore the unknown experimental bonus tracks of concept albums by bands you've never heard of. Instructor permission required.

HACU 217 Rahl Dahl's Matilda

Professor David Mansfield's legendary course exclusively about Matilda by Rahl Dahl.

## School of Interdisciplinary Arts

IA 112 Archaeo-politics in a Socio-economically Depressed Region of Psycho-medical Indentured Servants in their Trans-migrational Journey from a Historical Essay and Journal Prespective and How it Relates to Algebra I. *No description Provided.*

IA 289 Making Useful Things out of Recycled Materials  
In this course we will make things in Lemelson that are useful to our lives. Like pipes, bongos, swords, knives, fire-arms, tractors, rocket ships and nuclear power plants. All projects will be made out of found materials and scraps from the local junkyard. Tetnus shots will be provided.

IA 324 "I Might as well Choose a Major"  
Explore the possibility of Interdisciplinary work even as Hampshire becomes more departmentalized. We're not sure if it's possible but we'd like to find out.

IA 400 ADVANCED Housewife (Not just for Wives)  
Learn how to properly cook, clean, sew, raise children and wear an apron sexily. Open to MFLGBTQ and any other letter of the alphabet, although married straight females will be given the priority if class is over-booked.

## Outdoor Programs and Recreational Athletics

OPRA 101 Exploring the Woods!

Pot provided, but funds are limited so register quickly.

OPRA 303a Navigating The Hub for the Adventurous Spirit

We will provide topographical maps, compasses, backpacks and GORP.

OPRA 303b Navigating The Hub as Therapy

We will baseball bats and computers.

## David's Wisdom Nook

An Advice Column by David Mansfield

David Mansfield is the author of four self-help books: *Babies Don't Like Everyone*, *Finding Connections In A Reclusive Society*, *Making Marriages Last*, and *The Great Big Book of Trains*. He currently lives in Amherst, Massachusetts with his wife and three kids. A professor at Hampshire College, he teaches classes solely about Roald Dahl's *Matilda*.

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Dear David,

*My 14-year-old daughter has always been something of a handful, but it has never been more than my wife and I could manage. Recently, however, we have run into a problem neither of us knows how to deal with. Our daughter recently started dating an 18-year-old, and while he seems like a nice boy, we feel that 18 is just too old. We have made our position clear, but she won't hear it. What should we do?*

Parents Of Teen Agree That Older Significant Other is Not Good

Note from David: Please welcome a special guest columnist, former astronaut Phyllis Gredirt.

Dear POTATOSONG,

My, oh my! That is quite a problem. Learning how to handle the needs and demands of a teenage girl can be pretty difficult – though, of course, not as difficult as surviving in the cold, unforgiving emptiness of space.

I've done the mother thing four times, and I loved every second of it. But that doesn't mean it wasn't hard! I thought I had an idea of what I was getting into, but each daughter managed to surprise me. Of course, those surprises were nothing compared to the surprise of finding out that the manufacturer of our shuttle's windows didn't properly reinforce the glass, or the surprise that one of my shuttle mates experienced as he froze to death and was sucked into space through the broken window's 9-inch diameter. I don't think anyone who wasn't there could really understand. We had to seal off that section of the shuttle, which happened to be where all the food was stored. We hoped to make it to the space station in time, but none of us was surprised when we had to resort to cannibalism. Well, that's space for you!

As difficult as that was, it was dwarfed (red dwarfed, perhaps!) by the dread of finally arriving at the space station as the shuttle's sole surviving member only to discover that a meteoroid had wiped out the south branch of the station, severing communications and all human contact. For two whole years I had nothing to keep me company but the memory of what I had done to survive. Leave it to space!

Also, in space you can't eat good food or go outside.

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That's all for this time. For more, visit the archives at [davidswisdomnook.blogspot.com](http://davidswisdomnook.blogspot.com).



## I Could Never Get the Hang of Thursdays

A fortnightly column by Rachel Rakov\*

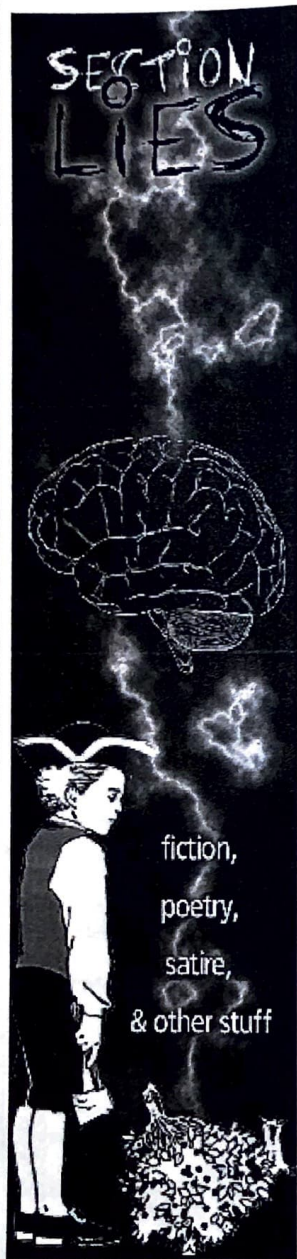
Welcome again, to yet another installment of my fortnightly column. I'm going to skip my standard introduction paragraph this week and get straight into my topic. In keeping with themes behind the Omen's "It Was A Dark and Sexy Night" erotica-writing contest, I thought I would inspire you all with a special TWO PART columns series on Bad Erotica.

Merriam-Webster defines 'erotica' as "literary or artistic works having an erotic theme or quality". It further defines 'erotic' as "of, devoted to, or tending to arouse sexual love or desire". I choose to open with these definitions for two reasons: one, so that in the event a reader has not previously know what erotica is, he or she will be able to read my column without confusion and will submit a story to the erotica contest, and two, so that readers of this column will understand that the following segments of appalling writing that have been classified as "erotica" do, technically, fit the definition, as hard as it might be to believe.

In this week's column, which will henceforth be referred to as "Part I", we'll focus on the most common, most easy to access, and most free world of erotica. Yes, I am, of course, referring to online erotica. The internet has brought with it many wonders – the ability to procrastinate ten times better than the previous generation, the ability to have a world of possibly incorrect encyclopediac information right at our fingertips thanks to Wikipedia, and, of course, all of the pornography and literary erotica we can get our hands on. (Which helps to contribute to the procrastination aspect.) Long ago if one wanted to read his or her share of smut, he or she would have to go all the way out to a bookstore to grab one of those "romantic novels", and endure the shame of bringing the purchase up to the sales desk, where the on-duty college intellectual would look at him or her with disdain. And what if you just wanted to read the book for amusement value? The college intellectual would *never* believe you.

Gone are the days of humiliation! For now we have, online, with 24-hour access provided you are 18 or over, Literotica.com, an adult community that advertises itself as a "FREE source for the hottest in erotic fiction and fantasy". All of the stories on the site are original and material can be submitted by anyone, provided he or she is not a minor. And before you get to thinking "Well, how much can there really be to write about?", let me tell you this: each story on the site is categorized in to at least one of 32 sub-categories that describe what the story is about. These categories range from the tamer sides of erotica (such as the "Erotic Couplings" section, whose tagline is "Wild one-on-one consensual sex") to the slightly kinkier sides ("Fetish", "Exhibitionist and Voyeur" and "Mind Control") to the downright peculiar (such as "Non-Human" section, which features "Aliens, ghosts, androids and more"). There's even a "Non-Sexual" section, which contains stories without a sexual focus, for those who aren't in a mood to read about anything with a sexual premise, although I'm not sure what that person is doing on Literotica.com. Perhaps they should try Godawful.net, home of God Awful Fan Fiction instead.

Of course, just because we have this plethora of erotica at our beck and call doesn't mean it's particularly *good* erotica. And therein lies the main point of my column this week. The majority of these stories are mediocre at best, and often much worse than that, fit only for humor and entertainment value in a non-sexual way. (I say the majority because there are a number of stories that, though in the minority, are really wonderful pieces of erotica. "Writhe", written by user Wolf of Mibu 69, is an example of this.) The fact that a lot of the erotica leaves much to be desired is not particularly startling; these stories are written by users of The Internet, who bring us such wonders as YouTube comments and flame wars on just about any forum you can think of. And there are certainly shades of YouTube comments hiding



within the stories themselves, at least in terms of some of the more creative spelling techniques, ("We both broke the kiss at the same time and yelled out as our bodies orgasm-ed at the same time") and in terms of sounding generally ignorant ("You felt out of this world!").

Let's be honest here: when reading a story that claims to be "erotic fiction", we'd all really prefer it to be *good* erotic fiction. And that goes double for one attempting to write erotic fiction. So, what makes for bad erotica? Here's a list of things to avoid, all taken from actual erotic stories found on the aforementioned website.

1.) Keep the similes at a minimum. It's not that we don't want to hear about a girl with eyes as blue as ocean or about a passion that's as fiery as a thousand suns. But try to avoid phrases like "Her nipples were about a half an inch long and looked like little erasers." While that may be accurate, it might have a less-than-desired effect on the reader, who will be all wet not from your words of passion, but from whatever he or she was drinking spraying out of his or her nose due to a snort of laughter.

2.) Watch out for exclamations. They're much harder to write than they are to say, and having a character say them believably is tricky. And I know it's hard to avoid, we are talking about writing erotica after all, so there's a marginal amount of "Ohhhhh!"s and "Yes! Yes! Yes!"s, and even the occasional, "I want you to fuck me, ooh, I want you to fuck me deep, please." But don't go overboard. Sentences like "I think I'm going to come...OH YES...YES... Joe! Joe! YEAH! keep...ARGGGHHHH!!!!!" do less to get your point across than you think they do, even with the use of all those capital letters and exclamation points.

3.) Please, please, for the love of God, avoid rhyming. It's just out of place when a reader is trying to get into the mood. It's one thing to think in rhymes in moments of passion and arousal, but quite another to write them in such sentence as "And when she arched her back with me forward, I could see, between my ankles, nearly her entire pussy. What do you think happened? Correct: Erect!"

4.) Try to be keep it real. Not in terms of the fantasies involved (they are, after all, fantasies), but

in terms of the language you use to indulge in these fantasies. Not that you make the attempt to get clinical about everything that's going on ("She had a very large labia majora that pooched out and rolled back in to reveal a narrow strip of pink flesh - what I'd seen back in yoga class. When I pulled them apart, out folded a theretofore hidden pair of medium-large labia minora ¼ of an inch wide and an inch long!"). But try to at least keep it in the realm of Actual Body Parts and Things That Actually Happen. ("I kissed her again, holding her close and I played with her magic button ... Her pussy erupted with cunt oil all over my hand as her insides gripped my fingers.")

To the best of my knowledge, nobody's insides should be able to grip *anything*.

5.) Pay close attention to your tag line. Most people will be reading your story based on what you write as your one-line description of the story. "Fertility exercise on planet of green skinned Ladies" might not be your choice for erotic reading, but at least it leaves a bit of mystery. At least, moreso than "Drunk & Horny, Julie & Mike have oral sex."

Anyway, I hope that in the weeks that follow, you take these pieces of advice to heart, whether you're writing an erotic story to submit to the Omen's contest, or if you're just reading and critiquing erotic stories as a way to avoid working on your Div III. I'll be back in another two weeks with Part II of my two-part column series on bad erotica, where I'll be reviewing quite possibly the worst book ever to be written. A hint for what's to come: the author's name is Eric Van Lustbader.

*\*Rachel Rakov is inspired by Douglas Adams, although not this week. Please note that this week's column is NOT intended for persons younger than 18 years of age.*



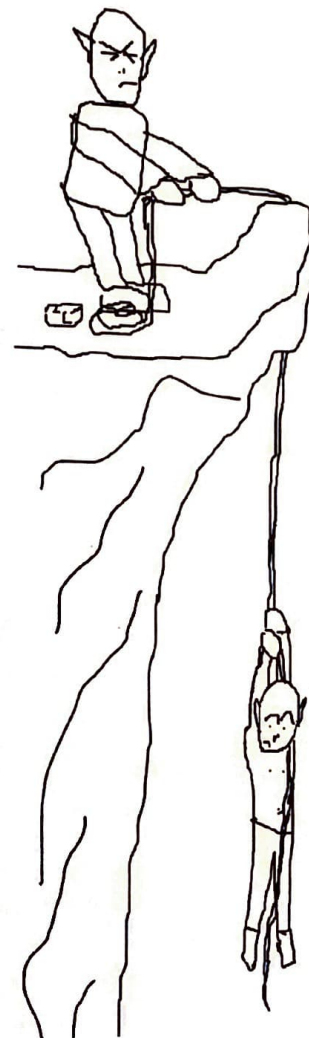
## Vanity of Gelimer Continued

patience. Suddenly Gelimer leaped to his feet and whirled away from the Emperor, facing the crowds, and screamed "Vanity of Vanities! All is Vanity!" for every atom he was worth, before the guards seized him and hauled him away. The quote comes from Ecclesiastes, and like the arson of Herostratus, like the cairns of Ozymandias and Ashoka, like Justinian's Church of Holy Wisdom, this act seared the name Gelimer into the historical record, where it has remained for fifteen hundred years.

All of these people disappeared, but their names, their vanities, remained.

To conclude, St. John Chrysostom puts it better than I ever could:

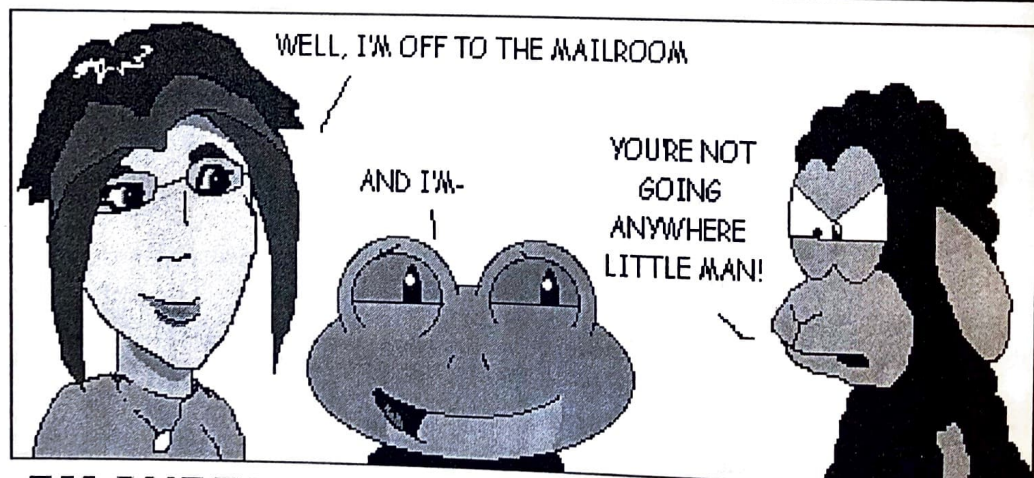
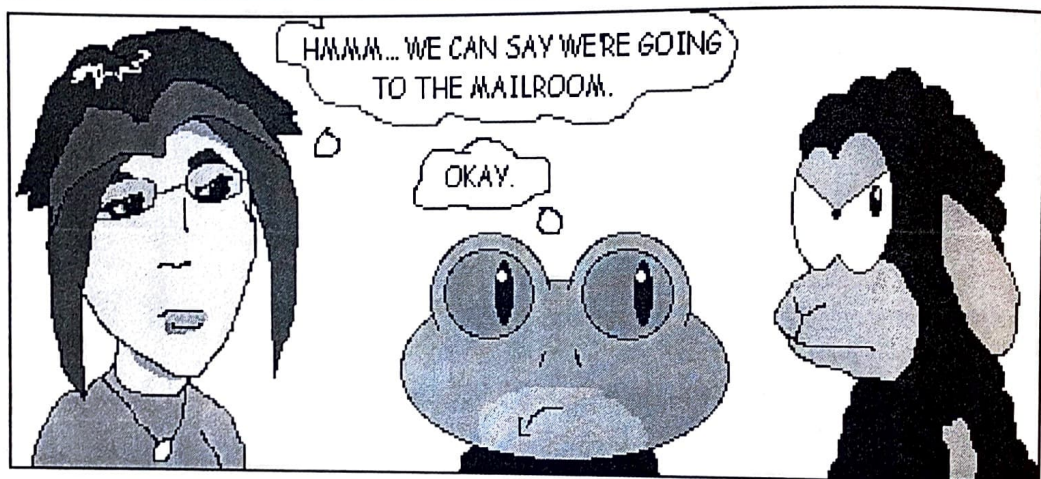
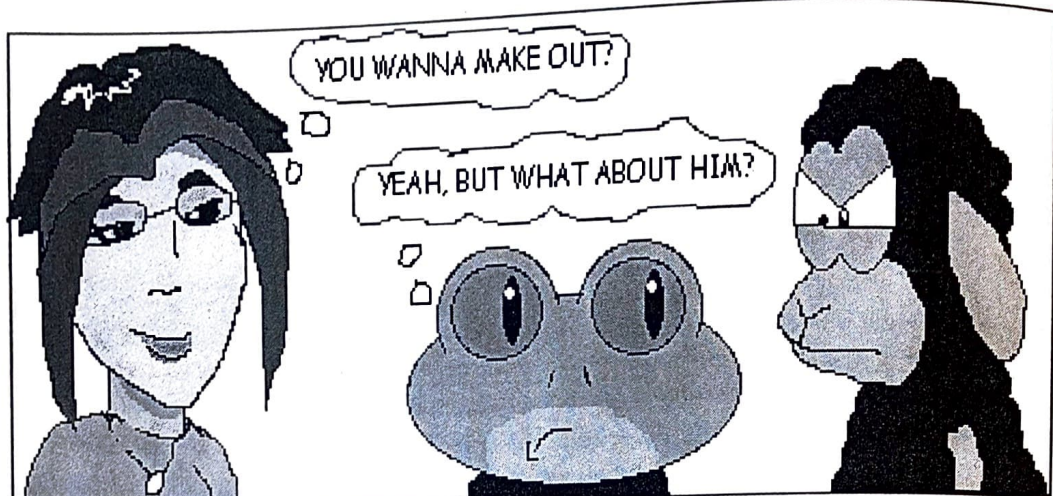
"Vanity of vanities, all is vanity"—it is always seasonable to utter this but more especially at the present time. Where are now the brilliant surroundings of thy consulship? where are the gleaming torches? Where is the dancing, and the noise of dancers' feet, and the banquets and the festivals? where are the garlands and the curtains of the theatre? where is the applause which greeted thee in the city, where the acclamation in the hippodrome and the flatteries of spectators? They are gone—all gone: a wind has blown upon the tree shattering down all its leaves, and showing it to us quite bare, and shaken from its very root; for so great has been the violence of the blast, that it has given a shock to all these fibres of the tree and threatens to tear it up from the roots. Where now are your reigned friends? where are your drinking parties, and your suppers? where is the swarm of parasites, and the wine which used to be poured forth all day long, and the manifold dainties invented by your cooks? where are they who courted your power and did and said everything to win your favour? They were all mere visions of the night, and dreams which have vanished with the dawn of day: they were spring flowers, and when the spring was over they all withered: they were a shadow which has passed away—they were a smoke which has dispersed, bubbles which have burst, cobwebs which have been rent in pieces. Therefore we chant continually this spiritual song—"Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."



Article  
Goblins  
are  
trying  
to  
get  
to  
the  
bottom  
of  
this.

# BLACK SHEEP & FROG

... Got Each Other's Back



**BY ANDREW FLANAGAN**